



## **Open Space Committee**

Date: Thurs, October 28, 2021

Time: 7:30 pm

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation

In attendance: Brian Kelder, Emily Nink, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Ann LeRoyer, David White, Shirley Canniff, Wendy Richter

Staff: Kelly Lynema

Visitors: Brian McBride, JoAnn Robinson

### **DRAFT Minutes**

#### **1. Review/approve 9/23/2021 Minutes**

The committee reviewed the meeting minutes dated; approved by all members present.

#### **2. Open Space and Recreation Plan 2022-2029 Update**

##### **a. Review survey summary results and text updates for Sections 2-5**

- The committee reviewed the results of the survey, which received 1057 responses. It was noted that some of the concerns about the bike path revealed in the comments will be addressed by the bike path study.
- Next steps: HW will determine how to integrate into the plan and their recommendations; Open Space Committee will review. This will be sent out before the November 11th meeting, so we have time to review in advance. The survey data will also be presented (in a different format) at the public forum on November 16th.

##### **b. Discuss Section 5 Draft Materials**

Ann compiled comments from committee members (chapter by chapter) to return to HW. The committee has not yet received a new version from HW. Kelly offered to set up a call between Ann and HW prior to the meeting on the 11th.

A lot of the places in Section 5 that are described are park and recreation sites which have had a lot of improvements. Need to update these materials & descriptions in collaboration with staff from parks and recreation.

Structure/outline of the chapter: introduction, three corridors, major sites (20 from last version of the plan), inventory chart.

- The committee reviewed the list of three corridors. Some members suggested emphasizing the mystic river/mystic corridor if we are going to include Alewife. The committee agreed this would be appropriate as a fourth corridor and give the opportunity to discuss current projects such as the bike route connectivity feasibility study.
- The committee reviewed the list of 20 major spaces and discussed that the Mugar land needs to be removed since it is not owned by the town. This has also been flagged throughout the draft plan wherever the issue is discussed. Kelly put together comments on the site maps of the top 20 major sites, some of which need updates due to changes/renovations that have occurred. If anyone else wants to make notes on these either on PDF or to drop off at the office, Kelly can make updates on the Town's GIS files.

Overview map: The committee discussed the meaning of "Town Owned, Protected" in the overview map of major sites and the need to clarify what this means (Article 97?) May need to check the consistency with the Article 97 listings. Also need to extend around the Arlington Reservoir into Lexington since the Town owns the land on the other side for the overview map. Finally, need to check whether there is an overview legend that denotes "E" for entry and "P" for parking.

The committee discussed some specific sites/site maps:

- Turkey Hill-- opportunity to connect the "orphaned" parcels?
- Arlington Great Meadows: David will mark the map for the Arlington Great Meadows and scan/send back to Kelly (need to remove Golden Living Center and add new paths).
- Shirley will review the Park & Rec sites and let the committee know where changes have been made or facilities added/upgraded.
- A lot of changes to Magnolia Park that need to be added to the map.
- Potential additions: Whittemore Park (tie in Uncle Sam Park across the street?) as one block of open space that is pretty prominent, or potentially the Jefferson Cutter House. If so, need to add maps for these, which could include adjacent features such as the bike path.

The committee reviewed the list of small spaces and the categories/groupings that are suggested for this new proposed sub-section.

- The committee would like to acknowledge the historical properties in this subsection as well (see below).
- The committee would also like to acknowledge the smaller conservation lands
- Elisabeth is writing up blurbs about the community gardens and school gardens / “outdoor nature classrooms”
- Wendy is working on rain gardens/ reclaimed green space inventory.
- 24 memorial gardens (Veterans) and 60 others maintained by Arlington Garden Club.
- Public realm and plaza areas-- like parklets (hardscape). Because of the pandemic, grant funds have been accessible and permitting has been expedited, because of the desire to support local businesses. Moving forward will likely be seasonal.
- Is the scenic byway mentioned? There is a master plan for it now. There is also Freedom’s Way. Both are mentioned but not sure where/ how thoroughly.
- The committee discussed whether we need another map (so as not to crowd the general open space inventory map) that includes schools, more labels but some members felt it would be less useful to add more town-wide maps and might be more efficient to reference what is already available. Could even be a recommendation for a future town project to create a more interactive online mapping tool with layers for these different categories of properties we are listing out.

Inventory chart: JoAnn Robinson offered to provide to Ann a list of properties from the historic inventory in case the committee wants to denote which sites have this extra layer of protection. The Town will soon embark on an inventory of its own and that could be mentioned in the OSRP. These sites may need to be added to the GIS as well.

- The committee reviewed a new draft chart that Ann created to quickly visualize the types of features available at both major sites and other school/neighborhood resources (e.g., basketball courts, gardens, wooded areas, etc.).
- It may be possible to categorize “scheduled” vs “unscheduled” recreation properties in the inventory to illustrate where there is space for unscheduled, more casual recreation activity. Shirley could get this type of information to the Committee.

c. November 16 forum (7:00pm)

Krista will come to the Nov 11th OSC meeting to give committee members a preview of the plan for the public forum.

- Kelly is putting together a press release around upcoming community meetings. Committee members should wait until next week to provide notice to assigned committees/commissions.
- There is a Spy Pond meeting also on the 16th. Shirley will let Ann know if the timing conflicts.

3. Agenda items not discussed

- a. CPA Projects
- b. 40B comprehensive permit applications
- c. Other news

**2021 Meeting Dates** November 11, December 9 (due to holidays)